

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE TORTURE INFLICTED UPON ANDRES CULTELLI
IN ARGENTINA.

NO DATE

CU 154D

R
XN

I fell on a "mouse trap" on March 31, 1975 at 10 p.m. Before 2 hours I was staked before an electric machine in San Justo Brigade. The sessions of electric rod and interrogation went on till the morning. Then they left me and after a while they forced me to stand up all day (April 1) with a chair hanging and the guards watching constantly. At night I was submitted to new torments, increasing the volume of the electric current. The questioning with electric rod continued until April 2 when they threw me in a cell completely extenuated. That night they repeated the whole thing adding more intensity until the dawn of April 3. At that point I could not get up and could hardly move by myself. When they unfastened my hands and feet I had to be carried to my cell. On April 4 I was again questioned and applied the electric rod with the same or higher intensity than before. The following day they tried to repeat the operation but under the conditions I was in I did not respond to the electric shocks, I was sort of insensitive and easily fell unconscious, therefore they threw me back in the cell after a brief session. On April 6 they didn't touch me. On April 7 in the morning, they again questioned me after blindfolding me, preparing me for the "submarine" or the immersion in water.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TORTURE: a) electric rod. From the second day on they increased the voltage. I still considered it quite tolerable. From then on the intensity was really terrible. That day a sort of duel took place between the torturer and I. He began to undergo a paroxysm and I had no choice than to recur to all my inner strength left in me in order not to be vanquished. He himself described his method as medieval. He intensified his electric aggression in all my body but especially on the genital organs, the anus, the mouth, the head, the eyes, the ears, the kidneys and around the heart. The electric rod was also applied to the bottom of my feet where it feels like needles. When they applied it on my bald head I couldn't control my movements and would see lights or flames even though I was blindfolded. The torturer kept repeating the threat: "I'm going to rot your brain, ideas can be killed" adding insults and threats as if following the compass and rhythm of the electric rod with the insults. When I was about to pass out or fall unconscious he put his foot on top of my liver as if to jump on it, with this I recovered my consciousness and the questioning went on until it was replaced by the electric rod. From the third day on, the last sessions with electric rod included the pressure of a sort of pillow on the mouth and nose, preventing any breathing and putting me on the verge of suffocation.

b) the submarine. They put 2 hoods on me. I could hardly stand up and they supported me so that I wouldn't fall down. I could hardly breath. That situation produced great anguish in me and was the moment that I felt psychological torture the most, although I didn't lose complete control. In the first immersion under water, I drank a lot of liquid, I lost control of my sphincters due to the internal pressure of so much liquid and the convulsion of the movements due to the lack of breath. When I couldn't stand it any longer, they released the hood which was hermetically closed at the neck, and I started to breath again. At that point the interrogation started again. Both with the electric rod and with the submarine they place you on the borders of life and death or intend to. After such critical situations one has the feeling of being reborn.

Hygiene and clothing. I took my first bath after 12 or 15 days of being in prison. Meanwhile, excrement had stuck to my skin and to my pants, which

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

80F178

Margaret P. Grafeld, Director

21/185

☒ Release ☐ Excise ☐ Deny

Exemption(s):

Declassify: ☐ In Part ☐ In Full

☐ Classify as ☐ Extend as ☐ Downgrade to

Date ☐ Declassify on ☐ Reason

Missing Pages

together with my T-shirt was the only thing I had to wear. In autumn, without any mattress or blanket. After that period things went better because they allowed the relatives to bring food and clothes. Although my family was not in Buenos Aires, I was given a share thanks to the solidarity of the other prisoners.

Water and Food. For 6 days I did not eat nor drink water. On the 6th day they gave a piece of bread and a small dose of water. At night of same day, I was given soup. After the 7th day, they started to give me food twice a day and water without limit. One must consider what it means to be forced to fast for so many days while being subjected to innumerable torments and to the state of dehydration, after so many sessions of electric rod that provoke so much perspiration. Between the 3rd and the 4th day I was under a delirious state; although I never lost control of myself regarding the questionings and never gave in any of my comrades, nor broke any principle. It's as if man's capacity to face the worst situations is inexhaustible as well as to recur to all his inner strength in the midst of torture. I think that the first few days are the most difficult ones. After overcoming them one can even face death -desired so many times- without the slightest sign of political weakness.

I was able to confirm that during torture I lost no less than 15 kilos (27 pounds).

Other kinds of torture. During torture I was kept strongly blindfolded. Besides suppressing sight, this protracted condition together with the dehydration and the physical weakness due to the lack of food, causes hallucinations. It was impossible to sleep during the 7 days I've mentioned. In the first place, because of the pains throughout the body and the increasing bother of the hand-cuffs with the hands to the back. All the time there is a guard who kicks the prisoner every time he goes by him or hits him with his fist or threatens him to death, or sticks needles in him etc. When one is unable to stand up due to the deplorable state one is in, they nevertheless stand you on your feet and hit you until they disarticulate the chest. This kind of torture, or "softening up", is extremely hard. It took me about three months for the pain in the ribs -broken ribs- to fade away and be able to sleep normally.

Who tortured me: From the beginning it was easy to prove, by the tone and accent and by the type of certain questions -and because they simply did not hide it- that both Argentinian and Uruguayan agents jointly participated in the torture, some of them having a military degree. For example, afterwards I was able to find out that one of the most active Uruguayan interrogators was Coronel Camacho. At one point, another Uruguayan official interrogated me also who was addressed to as "Gener